MOKO

A SERIOUS REVIEW

No 6

Price 10 cts. up

Point Lisas! Point Lisas!

It is good to hear that the public has responded to the invitation of the directors of the Point Lisas Industrial Port Development Corporation by oversubscribing for the $250,000 ordinary issue offered by the Corporation. It is not that we are fooled by all the tralala about applications from teachers, labourers, civil servants, policemen and pensioners.

These are normally the people who buy shares in any civilised country; we have only established and then stridently advertised the fact that such persons have not previously been allowed to purchase shares here in worthwhile concerns.

In any case their purchase of shares is not going to affect the control of the Corporation. If the Government with its $87,000 stake only rates one director what hope have the policeman and the pensioner?

This is an interesting speculation, but there is much else that interests us. The Prospectus is short on a good few details which the shareholder has a right to know and which we hope he will in due course come to know. The fact is that after several thousand words, two Sunday supplements and several editorials the public and the prospective shareholders are very much in the dark about many things.

It would be interesting to hear who were the original subscribers, whether there are any prospective tenants; if there is any demand for the type of accommodation to be offered at Point Lisas; where, given the IDC, will the project fit into the scheme of things? Further, how would the board of directors be removed and possibly replaced? If by voting who would be eligible to vote? Or more precisely, would the present shares being offered give these shareholders the right to vote the directorate or negate the present board?

Grand Scheme

How many of the intending shareholders know, for example, that the money they have so willingly subscribed will only begin to yield benefits if and when tenants are found for the industrial estate that is being planned.

Not many of them will have realised that the money raised from the present issue of shares will not of itself generate any money, that it will be used to pay for services already rendered, for financing separate missions to the United Kingdom and North America to solicit tenants, and for the acquisition of office space, office equipment and land.

Nor will many of them have known that this grand scheme supported by a directorate of nine, with an authorised share capital of well over $10,000,000, had a paid up share capital of $9.00 at the time of registration.

High Risk

Or it may be that they knew. If so what we have to say is even more important, for they will then have realised that they in fact, launched this enterprise, and that the capital they have invested is high risk capital on which the returns could quite easily be nil.

But it does the heart good to know that the hoi polloi when put to the test has come through. If what the reports say is true the evidence is clear that ordinary people in this country are willing and able to take charge of it.

Whether through ignorance or good intent the public has risen to the challenge of the Southern Chamber of Commerce. It would be easy to argue that the Southern Chamber and their associates Grace, Texaco and Caroni all of whom are represented directly or indirectly on the Board should have been the ones to finance this phase of the project. Never mind: the fact is that they have not. When risks are to be taken it is the ordinary people of these islands that have always had to take them, and they are still taking them.

How many of the directors, we wonder, have actually put their money where their seats are? Whether they have or not they now share an awesome collective responsibility. The public has taken them at their fine words; it is now for them to produce.

The Social Scene

THE TEN QUESTIONS OF "NO GOOD"

1. *Would you say that out of evil cometh good?*
2. *Would you say that building a community centre for a people does them any good?*
3. *Would you say that the purpose a village council serves in a community is good?*
4. *Would you say that the composition of the members on the executive of the village council is always balanced and good?*
5. *Would you say that when people seek leadership in social organisations that their motive for so doing is always good?*
6. *Would you say that the Better Village Competitions do the people much good?*
7. *Would you say that the motive for promoting these competitions is good?*
8. *Would you say that the scope given to Community Development officers to make use of their knowledge gained in Overseas Training is good?*
9. *Would you say that to administer all youth and adult social organisations from a ministerial level is good?*
10. *Would you say that the motive for the above mentioned type of administration is good?*

Well if you answer the foregoing questions in the affirmative, like me, you are 'No good" for out of all of the Good has cometh an Evil. Out of Community Development sprungeth Community Strife, out of Social Work has sprungeth Social Climbing and the matrix of confusion is the Community Centre.

Our daily newspapers carried the story that Government is considering legislation to deal with some of the mounting problems.

But will the result of this be good? Be careful how you answer for this is yet another question from one who is no good.

JAMAICA

Jamaica's rent-a-villas
come with rent-a-cooks,
rent-a-maids,
rent-a-nannies,
rent-a-gardeners,
and even rent-a-cars.

You can rent a lovely life in Jamaica by the week.

It starts with a country house or beach cottage or hilltop hideaway that comes equipped with gentle people named Ivy or Maud or Malcolm who will cook, tend, mend, diaper, and launder for you.

Who will "Mister Peter, please" you all day long, pamper you with homemade coconut pie, admire you when you look "soft" (handsome), giggle at your jokes and weep when you leave.

A kind of Nannyhood for Grownups, actually.

They'll spoil you.

But you'll also spoil yourself.

For more about renting the Life You wish You Led, see your local travel agent or Jamaica Tourist Board in New York, Miami, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Toronto or Montreal.

SYMBOLS THE TOURIST AD

Editor's Note:
This is an abbreviated version of an original Jamaica Tourist Board advertisement which appears regularly in American magazines.

Acknowledgements to the latest issue of New World Quarterly Vol. IV No.3

CHANGE-A REVIEW AND A PROJECTION

Today, after years of ennui and indifference, Trinidad and Tobago seems at last to be passing through a period of acute and prolonged self-examination. The prime cause seems to be a loss of faith in the social, economic and political structure of our society and the cessation of the belief that this society can provide the kind of existence that more and more persons are demanding of it. Nearly all the analyses made to date sharply challenge the status quo and call for a conscious effort to direct and accelerate change. Furthermore, it is apparent that the intellectuals and the young people in general are together propelling an increasingly mass movement in this direction.

Popular involvement in the cause is increasing for the good reason that, for the first time, more than just a few of our intellectuals are beginning to make contact with the society in which we live. Also, more and more, there are among the unemployed educated people, many with G.C.E.'s, who had been taught that this qualification was a passport to the white-collar working class. Now numbered among the unemployed they form a group who understands much that is being said about the ills of our society and they transmit their awareness on to others who do not, or do not as clearly as they do.

Also, in recent years, a number of institutions have developed with the clear intention of encouraging and propagating discussion on a scale hitherto unknown. There have been,too, on an unprecedented scale, persons who have been willing to use these institutions to project their opinions and ideas. Forceful and balanced discussions have gone a long way towards creating an informed populace.

But discussion has also, from time to time, been enlivened by statements somewhat more daring than others. Many of these have

• Continued on Page Four

EAST INDIANS AND INTEGRATION

By RAMDATH JAGESSAR

East Indians in Trinidad today are facing many complex problems, perhaps the greatest being their position as a minority which must in time integrate itself into the larger society. This would cause no difficulty if the larger society were strong and unified, but here the opposite is true.

Creole culture, which includes African survivals and a white, European predominance,is a bastard culture still in the process of formation. The minority can negotiate from a position of strength, secure in the possession of Indian culture. They choose not to see that Indian culture is also being bastardized and that it is moving in the same direction as creole culture. Neither is solid in itself, but Indian culture is more coherent if less vibrant, than its creole counterpart.

It is not a simple position, yet too many persist in seeing it as an Indian-Negro racist struggle. Negroes have little culture of their own, for creole culture is not African. What we have is Indian culture opposed to creole culture, with both of them standing in uneasy relation to the European-American pattern towards which they lean: Naipaul had to pose as an Englishman before he could evaluate Trinidad, not as an Indian or a Creole. It is a pity that the European strands which helped form Creole culture were second-rate. Trinidadians find it hard to understand the situation because of its complexity and the lack of definite guidelines. More problems are created by misunderstandings, by lack of information, by the traditional hostility of opposed cultures. Crucial aims are not defined, there is little sympathy for the other side. Also Indians are mainly rural, so that added to the racial problem is the antagonism of country to town, where the creoles live. Both sides have different religions, the Christian majority being less tolerant than the Hindu minority. Mutual suspicion clouds any aims that come to light.

Suspicion

Integration is one of these. Unfortunately the Creole society that beleives in integration does not see fit to say what it means by it. Indians imagine the worst, and believe Creole society wants to rob them of their identity, giving in return something they despise. It is reasonable to ask Indians to play their part in political and economic life. But it is ridiculous to ask that they merge their social and cultural life into creoledom. Yet no one has reassured them that their way of life is not in danger, so they remain aloof and face charges of racialism.

The few town Indians who accept creolisation have little influence on country Indians, and are regarded as outsiders. The heart of the East Indians is in the country, and their distance from the town further encourages separation.

This separation has been misconstrued as deliberate segregation and avoidance of Negroes. In reality it is only incompatibility. The Indian way of life is agricultural and pastoral, not urban: even the religion demands rural equipment. Country Indians have a distinct manner of speaking, family structure, code of behaviour, amusements, even a different diet from the Creoles. They lack the Negro's aggressiveness, dislike his concepts of dignity and lack of respect for elders. They may not care for rented houses,fetes,carnival, English movies. The few Negroes in the country may be partially accepted but these still have more in common with their urban counterparts than with Indians. Contact with the creole world is minimal, limited to a vague togetherness at Christmas or Carnival. Such Indians avoid Negroes or other Creoles simply because they have nothing to say to them. There are few activities they can share, no common purpose. Any form of integration would be difficult to achieve and even limited tolerance comes slowly.

Tolerance comes from understanding and sympathy, which is painfully absent in Indian-Creole relations. Creoles have failed to show interest in Indian life, and neither understand nor appreciate it. Hinduism, like Islam or Christianity, is more than a religion alone. It is a solid dignified pattern of living not easily surrendered even to another just as strong. In fact India has been accustomed to integrate other peoples into herself, instead of being integrated. To give up an entire way of life, or even a part of it, is no easy task, specially if the replacement appears to be defective.

Mutual Failure

Many Negroes fail to realise the enormity of what they so casually demand. It appears they have not considered sympathetically the plight of Indians systematically denuded of everything familiar to them. The Indians feel too much is demanded and too little promised in exchange.

Indians in their part show little sympathy for the Creoles who are yet forming their identity. Safe in their readymade if decaying culture they cannot understand the cultural emptiness of the Negro, or the pain caused by the Negro past. They become tired of strident Negro assertiveness, bored with the self-concern of Negro intellectuals.

Western style intellectualism is not part of the Indian heritage, so they do not join the people who are making Trinidad's future a Creole one. Not having to assert themselves they do not appreciate the social and cultural drive of the Creoles.

Indian Negativity

These Indians have the purely negative aim of retaining what they have, so they do not see the positive constructive aims of the Creoles. Maybe Creoles have taken the worst of many cultures to form theirs, but at least they have close contact with their major sources. Indians could help a little to form a future Trinidadian identity, but they are crippled by the paralysing suspicion that they are unwanted, that the cards are stacked against them.

East Indians do not all refuse association with Creoles of European origin, who can justifiably claim a respectable identity. But they do refuse much contact with Negroes more than with other Creoles. The main reason for this is what they consider the selfishness and complacency of Negroes. A slave past is a bitter heritage, but it hardly justifies disregard for other peoples.

Negroes have been victims, but their exclusive concern with their own problems, however large, irritates the Indians. They dislike the Negro's assumption that he is always the injured party who must be given something. They feel the Negro makes wild accusations of racism without considering that he himself may be guilty. They see the Negro as forgetting that Indians may have problems as well; and since Creole society is mainly Negro they look no further. Thus it is easy to reduce the position to a racial conflict, with Negroes being the gainers in integration and Indians the losers.

Little Compromise

Indians see Creoles as arrogantly assuming that whatever is Creole is right, intrinsically better than the Indian version. The present version of integration seems more like conquest than mutual agreement. Has not the Indian way of life anything to offer? Can it be uniformly worse than the creole way?

Indians will compromise on women's fashions, house furnishings but they will not consider changes in family structure, in manners, or in aesthetics. They refuse to allow intermarriage only because outsiders would destroy the closely- knit families they value so much.

Some also feel a contemptuous superiority over Negroes, but the majority are not that concerned. They simply ignore the Creole life as much as they can. They do not read newspapers, they use their radios for Indian music, and they seldom visit towns. So sure are they that Creoledom is against them that they discount any future changes and try to stick together.

Indian youth

But the Indians lack solidarity. They are hopelessly split into rival religious groups. The youth are in a dilemma of direction even more crucial than that of their elders. Some of them sense the sterility of Indian culture in Trinidad and want positive action. But their very upbringing makes them uncomfortable in the Creole world, and they do not care to become creolized, which would mean losing friends and family.

So they are becoming split personalities, losing the respect for India that anchors their elders while adopting the superficial forms of creoledom.

They are decided about neither, are disillusioned about race, politics, about the wide separation of Indian and Creole. A painful apathy results robbing them of political ambition as well as of cultural drive.

This phenomenon frightens the Indian community at large, and only urban Indians approve of this creolisation of their children. Further assimilation seems dangerously close, and anywhere they look they see danger signals. Racial politics means they will never supplant the creole government. The Civil Service,the judiciary,the mass media are predominantly creole. Radio stations give only two hours Indian music a day.

Neither newspaper pays more than token attention to them, and a casual reading would never show a stranger that Indians form one third of the population – All this can be justified, for Indians are a rural agricultural people, who define their aims in a different direction. They do not care if the Civil Service or the newspapers are creole, for they would not join either if they had the chance. But they are concerned about being left out when they have a right to be considered.

Indians pay a substantial amount in taxes and they seriously resent the fact that govenment expenditure is not proportionate. They note that most of the money is spent on industry, on housing, manufacturing, the Civil Service. They receive no direct benefit from this, as these are all Creole areas. Very little has been done for agriculture,the lifeblood of the Indians.

Now an attempt is being made to revive stagnant agriculture, but Indians are singularly unimpressed by the new development plan. They feel that this is really Negro Agriculture year, and they are certain that Negroes will get most of the grants, the farms, and the profits to come. This is a very reasonable attitude as anyone who has observed government sponsored agriculture will see.

Ministry of Culture

Similarly the Ministry of Culture has conveniently forgotten to encourage Indian cultural activities, but it has pushed the Creole version. And the Indians are angry about it. They do not mind being left out from town culture, from the Civil Service or the professions where they are a minority. But they do mind the unequal expenditure, the unequal radio time, and the obvious ignoring of their interests as a group. The honesty of creoledom itself is in trial.

Obviously integration must be reconsidered, and this time with more sympathy on both sides. Integration should not be the aim, which should be unity and a sense of national purpose. Total integration is absurd, for Indians will not renounce their heritage. Never really considered seriously by its proponents, integration has become a forbidding prospect for Indians. Perhaps the best thing would be to cease any insistent calling for integration at all.

Rethinking Integration

We must face Indian separation and encourage them to find their own ways of achieving union with the Creoles. This is more honest than attempts to coerce the Indians, for such pressure will bring only wider separation and hostility. Whether they like it or not both Indians and Creoles are slowly moving in one direction.

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MOKOJUMBIE

Events have once more focussed the attention of the Caribbean on Guyana where, on December 16, the people are said to have voted Mr. Burnham's Peoples National Congress back to power. If the Rupununi revolt is enough to judge by the Guyanese elections have already begun to bear their bitter-sweet fruit. This latest development has been surprising only in that violence seems to have sprung from a completely unexpected source and to have involved considerations wider than the purely national. But the fact of violence could hardly be surprising; in a way we all expected it. It is an old and true theory that when all alternatives for peaceful change have been deliberately closed then the mind turns swiftly to other things. And it is In Guyana today.

There are several features of the Guyanese election which call for comment the moreso since a sensational political trial seems very likely to keep it in the forefront of our minds for months to come. The first of these is the stark fact that the elections, so rich in manipulative devices, have been singularly devoid of issue. None of the three main parties had the heart or the motivation for a reasoned statement of their position. The Peoples National Congress, secure in the possession of the overseas postal vote and knowing itself to be favoured by most of the internal anti-Jaganite forces, had no need to bother; the other parties, despairing at the unevenness of the struggle, planned more to deal with the outcome than forestall it.

The absence of programme was in marked contrast to the experience of 1961 when all three parties had produced elaborate manifestoes and had made all sorts of promises to the electorate. Since 1961, however, the legacy of racism, of violence and reprisal has simplified all politics in Guyana. Race is the sole surviving ideology and the Guyanese, feeling the aftermath of civil war, are impatient at the promises of politicians and skeptical of political programmes. This is not, of course, the whole answer. The politicians, too, have found race a mirage which has progressively robbed them of the power for direction and leadership which constitutes the stuff of mature politics. Thus the campaign prior to December 16 was on all sides little more than an exercise in mutual execration and as much harm as possible to the image of one's opponent. The point was to do as much harm politician showed himself to be as adept at this and in this context every prominent

Thus Burnham, speaking vaguely of economic achievements and proudly of the social stability which obtained during his time, promised the frightened people of Guyana peace and order for the future. And to make assurance doubly sure, he disclosed the Beria "plot" just before the election and played on popular fears of Jagan's supposedly Marxist revolutionary tendencies. Jagan, for his part, concentrated his energies on complaining that the elections were rigged, and on depicting Burnham as dishonest. Also, he worked assiduously at cultivating the image of the honest, misunderstood and much maligned person which he has been nurturing ever since his defeat in 1965.

The second feature of the elections was the stark racial voting, and this notwithstanding the fact that Burnham claims to have crossed the frontiers of race in his victory. If this were so one could salvage something from his "victory", but in fact the claim stands revealed, on close examination, little more than a joke. It is true that in Suddie, a traditional PPP stronghold, the PNC won by 700 votes where formerly it had been defeated by 2,000. But this is only a surface victory and is explained by the fact that most of the new Suddie votes were proxy votes cast on behalf of about 2,000 workers, most of them Negro and from Georgetown, who had been employed on an irrigation scheme in 1968 and had registered at Suddie. On the evidence Courentyne Central is the only area where the PNC can claim a substantially increased support.

There the party gained 2,000 more votes than usual. The electorate had, however, itself increased by 2,000 votes and the nature of this increase is yet to be analysed. On the other hand, in Courentyne East where several Indians on being interviewed expressed a fear of Jagan's supposedly Communist leanings and a belief in Burnham's ability to attract foreign capital, the PNC got a very tiny 93 votes out of a total of 8,700 cast, that is to say just about one-hundredth of one per cent. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that there is a wide discrepancy among Indians between what they say and how they behave electorally, and this indicates the fear and mistrust uppermost in their minds.

The solidarity of Indian support for Jagan was matched by the solid Negro support for Burnham. ASCRIA, the Guyanese militant Negro group, backed Burnham to the hilt. Indeed, how could it be otherwise when their leader Eusi Kaywana, the former Sydney King, held an important post in the last Burnham government? Whatever Burnham may have said before and after the elections, the support he received was predominantly and dedicatedly racist. Need it is because the support was racist that a party programme was unnecessary.

When Burnham won new support it was at the expense of D'Aguiar and through the overseas postal vote. Businessmen and the coloured middle class saw him as the only alternative to Jagan whose term in office, they felt, was bound to be stormy. Thus they voted for Burnham as the only man who could preserve stability, and not for any policy which he defined. In this respect his lack of clear definition was an advantage. Burnham is now free to follow any line or none at all and can never be accused of breaking promises made to the electorate. No promises were made.

So far, then, little real change can be discerned in Guyana's politics. Sympathisers with the PNC argue that it is unfair to judge Burnham after only three years of office. His main job was to ensure stability, and to repair some of the damage done between '62 and '65. He accomplished this, and now free to outline a policy and build. Judgement should therefore, come only at the end of the present five years. They argue that the PPP means inevitable chaos, and again why chaos will be inevitable.

A grim sense of necessity surrounds these arguments, for Guyanese politics are now dominated by questions of sheer survival. For the Guyanese people it is literally a matter of life and death who gets in. Hence is seen as absolutely necessary to vote for the messiah of one's own race, who is sacrosanct and above criticism.

Yet one wonders who in the West Indies is qualified to judge the Guyanese. Not even the people of Jamaica have had to choose between such a number of equally sterile alternatives. The society had first to choose between Negro and Indian racism; also between Jagan who adheres to the cult of doctrinaire Marxism, and Burnham who still loves the solemn rhetoric and foppish posing of Caribbean leadership. Those choices were difficult enough to begin with and to have had to choose between American and Communist intervention, is to have had no choice at all. The C.I.A. and the Communists understand each other's methods, and both operate to the detriment of the small nation.

Out of it all emerges the concern of the Guyanese people with the primary task of survival. Considerations of expediency override those of morality since whatever makes for survival is right and whatever does not is wrong. The successful politician becomes a messiah in whom all the hopes of the group are vested. Today, faith in "Big Brother" and a working knowledge of Machiavelli are all that is necessary for success in Guyana.

Venezu
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It is commonplace to hear comment on the their history and contemporary situation; especially so long a social contact with Trinidad in particular.

This profound ignorance has inevitably been determined largely by recent events and is a victim and maltreating Trinidad fishermen they are said to set up an "antonomous" State there.

The image we have formed of Venezuela is really a Caribbean Society sharing a common industrial development. Its political history and the underlying similarity of its socio-economic

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PROGRESS IN DEMOCRACY

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In the 1958 and 1963 elections, Accion Democratica, which had long fought the military dictatorships, won the Presidency and Congress, while in the most recent elections, held December 1 last, Rafael Caldera of the COPEZ (Social Christian) Party has won the Presidency with AD retaining Congressional Superiority.

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Again many observers have not been slow to see the peaceful transfer of, Presedential power from one group to another as solid proof of the health and vitality of the new Venezuelan democracy.

There is no denying of course that in common with West Indian territories, Venezuela since the 1930's has experienced some degree of democratisation of its socio-political order. The death in 1935 of the hated dictator Juan Vicente. Gomez was followed by an opening up of the political order invoking the introduction of a liberal constitution, universal adult franchise, and a flowering of political parties and trade unions. A most significant aspect of all this was that workers and peasants ignored for centuries, were now for the first time beginning their first lessons in modern political practice.

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Venezuela—so Near so Far

It is commonplace to hear comment on our ignorance, as West Indians, of the Latin American countries, their history and contemporary situation; especially so in the case of Venezuela which is so nearby and has had so long a social contact with Trinidad in particular.

This profound ignorance has inevitably influenced the view of Venezuela that we hold. It is a view determined largely by recent events and is a view largely of greed and violence. If Venezuelans are not arresting and maltreating Trinidad fishermen they are seeking to grab two-thirds of Guyana or aiding Rupununi ranchers to set up an "antonomous" State there.

The image we have formed of Venezuela, from these recent events, is too simplistic. Venezuela is basically a Caribbean Society sharing a common history of European colonialism, slavery sugar and latterly, industrial development. Its political history and institutions might be different but let us not misunderstand the underlying similarity of its socio-economic relations to ours in the West Indies.

We need then to dismiss the crude image of greed and violence and explore the Venezuelan social reality. If, (as the Government is intending) genuine and productive relations with Venezuela and indeed with South America on the whole must be established, then we cannot afford to hold the distorted, over-simplified images that a cheap commercial press continues to purvey.

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But the new democratic plant had hardly taken root before it was virtually destroyed. Late in 1948, just a few months after Venezuelans had for the very first time elected a President, the forces of reaction spearheaded by the Army overthrew the new Government; and held the reins for 10 years. It was only in 1958 that a peculiar combination of mass discontent and frightened soldiery led to the toppling of the Perez Jiminez dictatorships.

Much can be and has been written about the differences in policy between the military and civilian administrations that have governed in Venezuela over the last twenty years. By and large in any such comparison the civilian regimes score higher marks.

Under these latter there had been greater political freedom and more activity to improve the social amenities of life – education, health, housing and so on.

COLONIAL ECONOMY

But the fundamental question, as always, remains. What transformations have taken place in the economy? Or, in other words, how far has the Venezuelan economy moved from its original colonial, foreign-controlled basis to one of Venezuelan control and determination.

In the final analysis any attempt to characterise Venezuelan Society as democratic which does not tackle the question of who controls the economy is at best pious dreaming, at worst down right deception and fraud.

The harsh reality is that under military and curtain rule alike foreign control of the Venezuelan economy has continually increased.

The 1948–58 military regime initiated a policy of encouraging foreign, mainly U.S. capital which by 1958 ended in total foreign control of Venezuelan oil and iron, and extensive foreign interests in agriculture, manufacturing and commerce. Venezuela during this period was the world's largest exporter of petroleum.

Except for legislation to increase the share of oil revenues accruing to the State and the setting up of a national oil company (SIC) The subsequent civilian governments have followed, even with greater sophistication, the policy of foreign investment and control.

What have been the general consequences for the population? Apart from the foreign investors, the main beneficiaries have been a new petit-bourgeois class which has found employment in an expanding, top heavy Government Service and in the industries, and ancillary services that accompany industrialisation. Whatever wage increases have been gained by workers have been largely eaten away by the remarkable price inflation which has become a hallmark of South American economies, Caracas has been said to be the most expensive city in the Western Henisphere.

The peasants have probably fared the worst. The military regime simply ignored them; the civilian regimes promised land but investigations indicate either that the peasants have been given titles and no land, or that where land has in fact been allocated, the quality of the soil and the lack of the necessary credit, water, guaranteed markets etc, make an improved living standard virtually impossible. Meanwhile unemployment continues to rise.

How then does the new President Caldera fit into this picture? In this connection it was amusing to read one observer in the Guardian a few weeks after the election commenting that Caldera and his party were "more to the left" than the outgoing Accion Democratica regime, and could be expected to cater to the needs of the the peasants.

No one who understands the origina and performance of COPEI could be so naive. COPEI, with Caldera always its leader,was formed in the 1940's as a coalition of reactionary clergy,landowners,some army officers, and neo-conservative, urban intellectuals professing a Christian concern for the starving masses.

The Party has never been known to support the cause of workers, peasants or progressive movements in Venezuela. It has traditionally denounced Accion Democratica and allied groups as Communist; of the major parties, it was the least outspoken in its criticism of the Perez, Jiminez dictatorships and consequently the least persecuted. Major electoral support for the party has come traditionally from the Western Andean region which has always been noted for its political backwardness.

Caldera's electoral "victory" (it must be recalled that he polled less than 30 per cent of the popular vote seems to have resulted not from any popular demand for a COPEI administration but from two other factors:

(a) Widespread disaffection with Accion Democratica which had been in office since 1958.

(b) The splitting of AD votes which followed the decision of Luis Beltram Prieto, a long-time AD leader, to contest the election when the party decided to nominate Gonzalo Barrios instead.

Caldera's position therefore is a most precarious one. He is a minority President; has no majority in either Chamber of Congress; and has recently announced that he would not entertain any idea of a coalition Cabinet.

Here then is a classic setting for political instability and chaos in Venezuela: a country where political compromise is a rare thing.

If Caldera cannot maintain constitutional order and simultaneously meet the rising demands of Venezuela's masses, what then is the prospect?

The most likely would seem to be another military coup; but this possibility hinges on the level of unity among the key workers and peasants' groups in the country. In 1958, a popularly-based movement of workers. Students was able to prevent the imposition of yet another dictatorships. The Venezuelan people must again be on the alert.

WHICH IS OUR CONCERN?

Which is our concern?
Let it not be the freedom that
burns in the eye blind with organised sentiment.
(I'm afraid
that that is what is meant
by the anthem and the flag
which we will be told
to raise high above the natural hold
of our voice and eye.)
Let it not be the freedom of the
living lie,
the freedom of the bright braid
that must fade and flag.
Let it instead
be the fragile freedom of the
underfed,
the cautious freedom of the
pessimist
who knows that what is most
prized is most smoothly lost.

BRIAN CHAN.
GUYANA.

Moko Wants to Know

Mr Earle Lewis has now gone and returned. After being detained at Piarco airport by the immigration authorities in Thursday, December 12, the family was allowed to depart on Friday, December 13. The net cost of this official intervention was a substantial sum of money, the loss of their baggage, (it has not yet been recovered), and a great deal of embarrassment. But these are matters to be reckoned elsewhere.

A vital issue is involved in all this. The Lewis family was prevented from leaving on the ground that the tax clearance certificate issued to him by the Income Tax department had not been signed by the competent authority. The view taken was that the officer who had signed was not competent also she had signed certificates regularly before and has,presumably, done so several times since.

This curious theory puts every public act of the kind in jeopardy. What faith can the public have in documents offered by the public service if documents given to members of the public in good faith by public servants and received in good faith can later be declared null and void? The answer is simple: no faith at all. Some further explanation seems to be in order. MOKO Wants To Know

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MOKO

No 6

A SERIOUS REVIEW

Price 10 cts. up

Calypso and Morality

By GORDON ROHLEHR

The season of Carnival and Calypso has come round again, and one expects that the annual debate on the morality of Calypso will be reopened. Late last year that debate assumed a new dimension when Archbishop Pantin and The Mighty Sparrow exchanged views on the topic. The Archbishop suggested that certain kinds of calypso do encourage immoral behaviour, while Sparrow declared that it is not a question of too low morals in the calypsonian, but one of too high morals in some other people.

New Metaphors

Sparrow's statement is, I feel, more than the subtle word-play in which calypsonians often indulge. It indicates his consciousness of two kinds of people and two "moralities" in his society. On the one hand, there are people who, like the Archbishop, are committed to the Christian way of life. To these may be added many sober-minded citizens who are not necessarily Christians, but who think that something is seriously wrong when so many calypsonians show a relish for sexual themes, and use all their subtelty and wit to find new metaphors for lust.

On the other hand there are "the people" who have hardly ever been "Christian" although they may have assimilated some of the elements of Christianity. The pattern of their lives has been set by history, and has only been slightly modified by contemporary politics and economics.

Lower Class Form

It is clear that these two societies in Creole Trinidad don't speak the same language and have very little real sympathy for each other. Thus it may be that when the "decent", who are quite often the privileged members of the society criticize the "immorality" of the masses, they are speaking in terms that are irrelevant and indicative of their failure to understand the forces at work in their society.

The Calypso has always been a lower class form, and as such has always been commented on and condemned by certain sectors of the middle and upper classes. Its development paralleled that of Carnival which changed after emancipation from being a fete for the privileged and white, to being a fete for the underprivileged and black.

Certain lower class elements used Carnival as a time to settle scores against their enemies, so that Carnival was stigmatised by the privileged classes as the festival of hooligans. From that time to this it was condemned by those who considered themselves to be the decent citizens of Trinidad. Between the 1860's and the 1880's, it was even termed "Jamette Carnival".

Thus Calypso developed not merely as a lower-class form, but as the special music and satire of a group who were outcasts even from the lower classes. The influence of the chantwells and stick-fighters helped give Calypso a further association with the pose of physical and sexual superiority and with violence.

Preoccupation with pose, sexual themes and violence remains a major feature of Calypso. This indicates that the essential social conditions of the majority of calypsonians have changed little. The moralists who speak of the smutty element in calypsoes hardly ever consider this point. Thus calypsonians are being told daily what they should sing and do. They are to sell a proper version of Trinidad to the tourists; they must recognize that they are the culture of Trinidad; they must not gyrate too much because this will shock the decent folk who now frequent the tents. In a word, they must be moral, where by moral one means middle-class.

No Bacchanal

This is really the crux of the problem. Apart from the professional Christians and the recognizably decent folk, there are the members of a rising middle-class, who are anxious to show off newly-acquired values and therefore want no bacchanal, "no confusion with them hooligans". The situation of these arrivistes is as strange as it was a generation after emancipation when the wives of a dying plantocracy bitterly resented the growing equality of women of colour who may have been slaves and concubines a generation before. Brown men and women were scorned by the whites and learned to scorn their black cousins and forebears. The brown man was therefore cut off from both sides of his heritage, and lived a twisted sick and schizoid existence.

Nowadays, values of colour are being replaced by values of wealth and education, but the West Indian middle-class remains an historical sick joke. We may now be aspiring only to the wealth which was once automatically associated with white ness, but we must now endure the new paradox of being a middle-class with no upper class to imitate, since the whites have consolidated their positions of wealth and privilege and have become wisely invisible.

Nothing can be more distressing to a rising petty bourgeoisie than to be denied even the veneer of aristocracy. We are then forced to stress words like "morality", "standards" and decency", to prove to ourselves and the rest of the world that we have really achieved these things. It becomes more painful when the question of art and creativity arises. If we fail to master traditional European forms of classical art, we are forced back on our divided selves, and can discover only the sterility endemic in those who scorn their roots but have no superiors to ape. We then return to the masses and plunder them for vital creative folk forms, which we take, castrate, clean up, make as sterile as ourselves, and label "culture".

Impose Values

Having little real sympathy for the people, the Trinidad moralists feel that they have the right to impose values on them. This would not be so ridiculous if they practised what they preached; but it has also been part of our history that the very white upper classes were among the most sexually based and debauched people in the society; and this license has marred every aspect of our social life. We have inherited and live by a moral double standard.

Thus the calypsonians note year by year that their severest critics seem most to enjoy the smut. A calypso like The Vice in they own Head makes this point. But it is most cogently made by Sparrow in The Outcast where he accuses the moralists of "false pride".

"The reason why I say false pride is simply this They enjoy the song, they enjoy the music, and yet they so damn prejudice
And they bracket you in a category so low and mean
Man they leave the impression that your character is unclean"

A serious point is being made here, and a serious question posed. Who is to set standards in a ramshackle society where although middle and lower class men embrace the same principles (and often the same concubines) the privileged are prepared to treat the less fortunate as social lepers?

Matter Of Judgement

Oscillating between decaying Post-Victorian prudery and brash force-ripe modernity, Trinidad is in an understandable muddle about standards which complicates the entire matter of judgement. At this time it is worth asking whether one should not seek the opinion of the people themselves. The question of who is to speak on the people's behalf has scarcely been asked. Don't the people exercise their own standards in the tents? Isn't an overtly smutty calypso often rejected, and does this not indicate a preoccupation with aesthetic standards, with the form and wit of Calypso, rather than simple sexuality.

Much more social history needs to be written and much more investigation done into the roots of popular attitudes, before any judgement can be passed. Indeed, Calypso is one of the few forms in the society that tells us who and what we are; it is a tangible part of our social history which we cannot afford to ignore. Perhaps it is because we recognize this and are too cowardly to be honest that we want the calypsonian to present the image-ideal of what we would like to be. When he refuses to do this and sings whatever he pleases, and says whatever he feels, he is not being immoral, but more honest than people who refuse to face self and reality.

The society itself will have to change if the people's music is to change. Only middle-class calypsonians will proclaim middle-class morality. While Calypso remains the music of underprivilege it will reflect the humour and the various responses of underprivilege. What disturbs our moralists is the uneasy feeling that the lower and middle classes think and act in an essentially similar way, and that the gap which they would like to maintain is in fact superficial. What is more striking proof of this unacknowledged unity of consciousness, than Sparrow's Get to Hell Outa Here, where the calypsonian shows how the politician can adopt the pose, the tone and the language of the hooligan? All awee is one!

CHANGE-A REVIEW AND A PROJECTION

• From Page One

emanated from the young or youthful to an extent that makes it useful to try to understand the special phenomenon of youthful dissent.

As spokesmen of the young Als and Primus deserve special mention. These are the men who have enlivened the scene by the adoption of extremist positions and by the organization of sizeable groups of the underprivileged sections of the community. Themselves and their groups, "Young Power" and "Black Panther" have developed as potent forces in the society notwithstanding, or perhaps because of pressure from officialdom. Both Als and Primus are now at the crisis points of their development. Als seems at present concerned with searching out a direction for the future, as the establishment of his group's mechanical co-operative indicates.

Primus on the other hand still contents himself with exposing society's current ails, and this is perhaps to be explained by the difference in the nature of his movement. It is not true, as I was incorrectly said to have said some time ago, that "he does not fully understand of what he is speaking." His strength comes out of conviction, a conviction based on bitter experience and acquired knowledge. Add to this his emotionalism, his charismatic power and the composition of his group and then wonder what will occur if they are unheeded.

All these writings, speeches and movements have brought into focus a gap – a widening gap. It would be more correct to say an idea gap. In general young people respect age and experience for what it is. It is the inflexibility of the old that creates the problem. The behaviour of the over 40's (a few exempted) indicates that experience breeds dogmatism. They are content to promulgate by authority a settled opinion using an irrevelant experience as their basis.

No honest positive attempts are being made to negotiate with the youths who comprise a sizeable portion of the society. The right of a people or section of a society to have a say in governing themselves is a fundamental principle.

What young people are seeking is a realisation of this fundamental principle. An equitable say in the governing process and conscious and visible indications that their present and future welfare is being actively sought after.

The young, already better educated than their older counterparts, are vigorously cultivating relevant and mature minds. They are ready to put an end to mere speculation of what is to be done and now want to do it. In fact the latter is being demanded.

This is a just demand admitting of no compromise. But it is difficult to negotiate with the old who in general are hostile on this matter of principle. Also for the young a compromise on this principle would be a betrayal of it.

Perhaps this is why efforts by the Government and the establishment to promote the welfare of the youths are not meeting with the plaudits they expected. Without an effective equitable voice by the young in the formulation and execution of these plans the sincerity of these moves will continue to be in doubt.

It may be well that they be reminded of the quote from Lowell.

"New times demand new measures and new men,
The world advances and in time outgrows,
the laws in that our father's day were best;
And doubtless, after us, some purer scheme
will be shaped out by wiser men than we."

Only the co-operation of the old with the young can prevent our present superficial peace from deteriorating into chaos and confusion

— LANGSTON ROACH

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